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Reduction of military budgets: objective information on military matters, including transparency of military expenditures

General and complete disarmament: transparency in armaments

Letter dated 21 June 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Argentina and Chile to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you a copy of the Declaration signed at Ushuaia on 16 February 1999 by the President of Argentina and the President of Chile, on the occasion of the commemoration of the centennial of the embrace between President Roca and President Errázuriz at the Strait of Magellan (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under items 64 (b) and 76 (b) of the preliminary list.

(*Signed*) Fernando E. **Petrella**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of
the Argentine Republic

(*Signed*) Juan **Larraín**
Ambassador
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* A/54/50.

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Annex

Joint presidential declaration on confidence-building and security-building measures

1. In a solemn setting of historical re-enactment, the President of the Argentine Republic, Carlos Saúl Menem, and the President of the Republic of Chile, Eduardo Frei Ruiz-Tagle, met at Punta Arenas and Ushuaia on 15 and 16 February 1999 to commemorate the momentous encounter in 1899 between their predecessors, President Julio A. Roca and President Federico Errázuriz Echaurren, who in a visionary spirit promoted a phase of renewed friendship between Argentina and Chile. This paved the way for the signing of the May Pacts of 1902, which established the first agreements for limiting arms procurement, among many noteworthy acts.

2. Against that backdrop, the two Heads of State stressed their reiterated commitment to preserve, strengthen and develop the ties of enduring peace and perpetual friendship between Argentina and Chile, a commitment which is concretized in the Treaty of Peace and Friendship of 1984 and extends auspiciously to all spheres of bilateral relations on the threshold of the twenty-first century. As proof of this, the Presidents paid tribute to Cardinal Antonio Samoré, an important figure in the achievement of those objectives, by inaugurating a monument in his memory.

3. The Presidents, in addition to sharing a vision of the future, reaffirmed the commitment of Argentina and Chile to the defence of their common interests in the Antarctic and the strengthening of the ties of bilateral cooperation in the framework of the Antarctic System.

4. The Heads of State noted that the intentions expressed in the Joint Presidential Declaration of 1991 with regard to strengthening a frontier of peace, in fulfilment of the democratic mandate of their peoples, have opened the doors to the twenty-first century in an auspicious manner. In that connection, they attached importance to the Joint Declaration of Buenos Aires of 15 December 1998 and to the Declaration adopted on the occasion of the signing of the Agreement on Delimitation of the Boundary from Monte Fitz Roy to Cerro Daudet, of 16 December 1998. Against that backdrop, they reiterated their satisfaction at the results achieved in the implementation of the confidence-building and security-building measures between the two countries and emphasized the high level of cooperation and dialogue between the armed forces of the Argentine Republic and the Republic of Chile. In particular, they expressed their satisfaction at the progress achieved in the bilateral consultation meetings between the ministers for foreign affairs and the ministers of defence, held at Zapallar in July 1997 and at Campo de Mayo in 1998, noting their contribution to the strengthening of bilateral cooperation and to the coordination of positions on security and defence issues. The meetings gave thrust and momentum to the consultations and coordination carried out in the framework of both the Standing Committee on Security and the mutual consultation mechanism between the chiefs of staff of the armed forces.

5. The Presidents reaffirmed the desire for their Governments to follow up the agreements adopted at the Miami and Santiago hemispheric summits with respect to confidence-building and security-building measures and to the progress verified, both at the conferences of ministers of defence of the Americas and at the conferences on confidence-building and security-building measures that have been held. They also attached importance to the Political Declaration of July 1998 establishing MERCOSUR, Bolivia and Chile as a zone of peace because of its contribution to integration and the growth of regional dialogue.

6. The two Heads of State agreed to continue to promote initiatives on confidence-building and security-building measures at the bilateral and regional levels, attaching value

to the spirit that gives rise to such measures and the contribution to international peace and security which they represent. In that connection, they recognized the importance of continuing to provide information to the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms and the system for standardized reporting of military expenditures.

7. The Presidents emphasized the value that the explicit statement of their countries' defence policies, through the publication of the *Book of the National Defence of Chile* in Chile and the legislation and presidential declarations on the subject in Argentina, has had. In that context, they wished to underscore the importance of having taken the step, together with their Governments, of requesting the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) to draw up a proposal for establishing a uniform methodology for measuring defence costs in Argentina and Chile, instructing the competent authorities of their respective countries to take such steps as they may deem appropriate to implement the ECLAC proposal in the shortest possible time, with the intention of encouraging the spread of this joint decision to the rest of the region.

8. In signing this Declaration commemorating the "embrace at the Strait of Magellan", President Menem and President Frei pledged to ensure that the spirit of transparency and deep friendship which it embodies will be measured by and concretized in ever closer ties between Argentines and Chileans.

9. Signed at Ushuaia, Argentine Republic, on 16 February 1999.

Carlos Saúl **Menem**
President of the Argentine Republic

Eduardo **Frei Ruiz-Tagle**
President of the Republic of Chile